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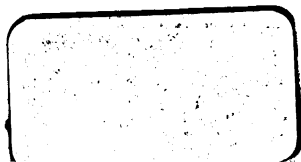
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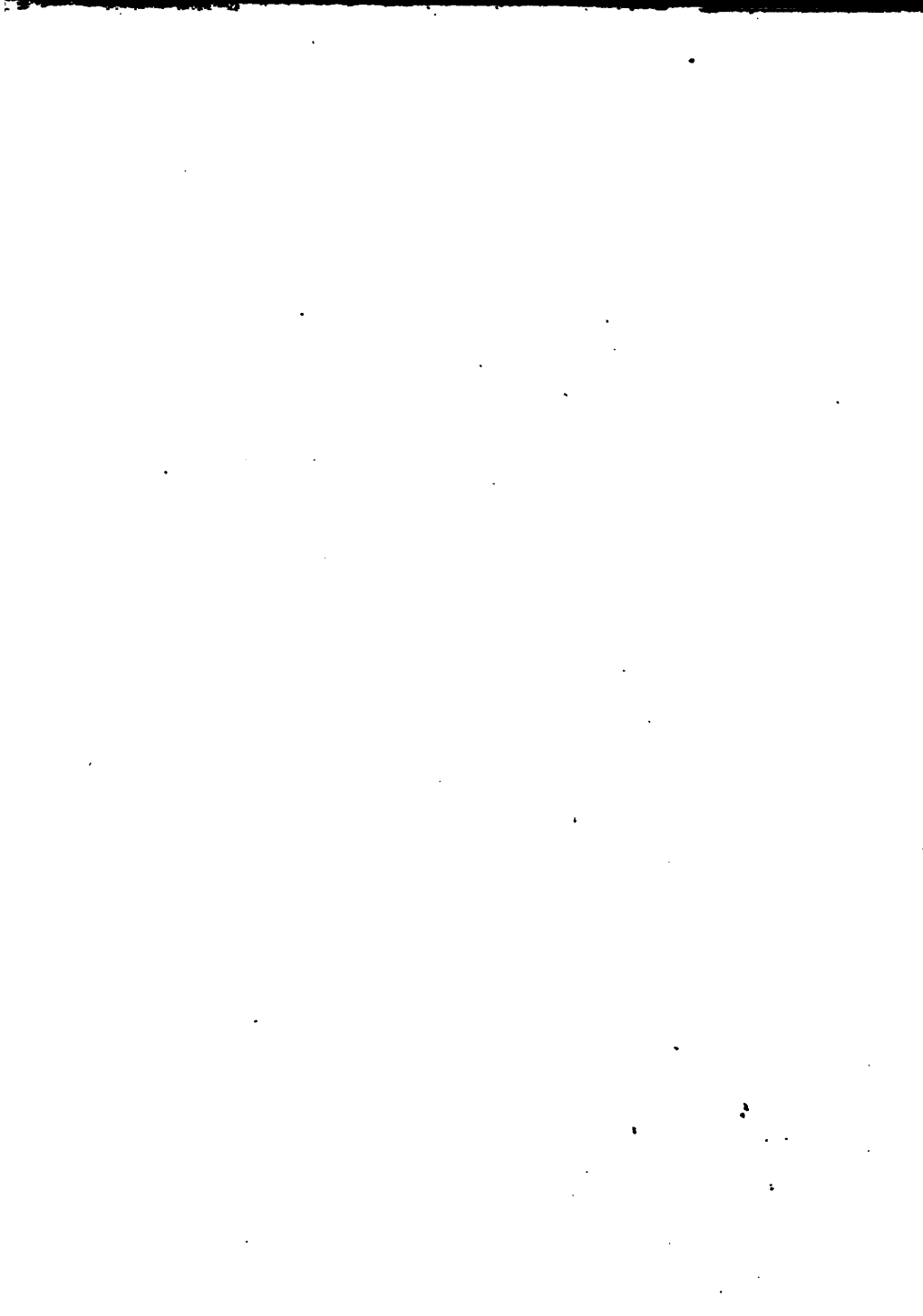
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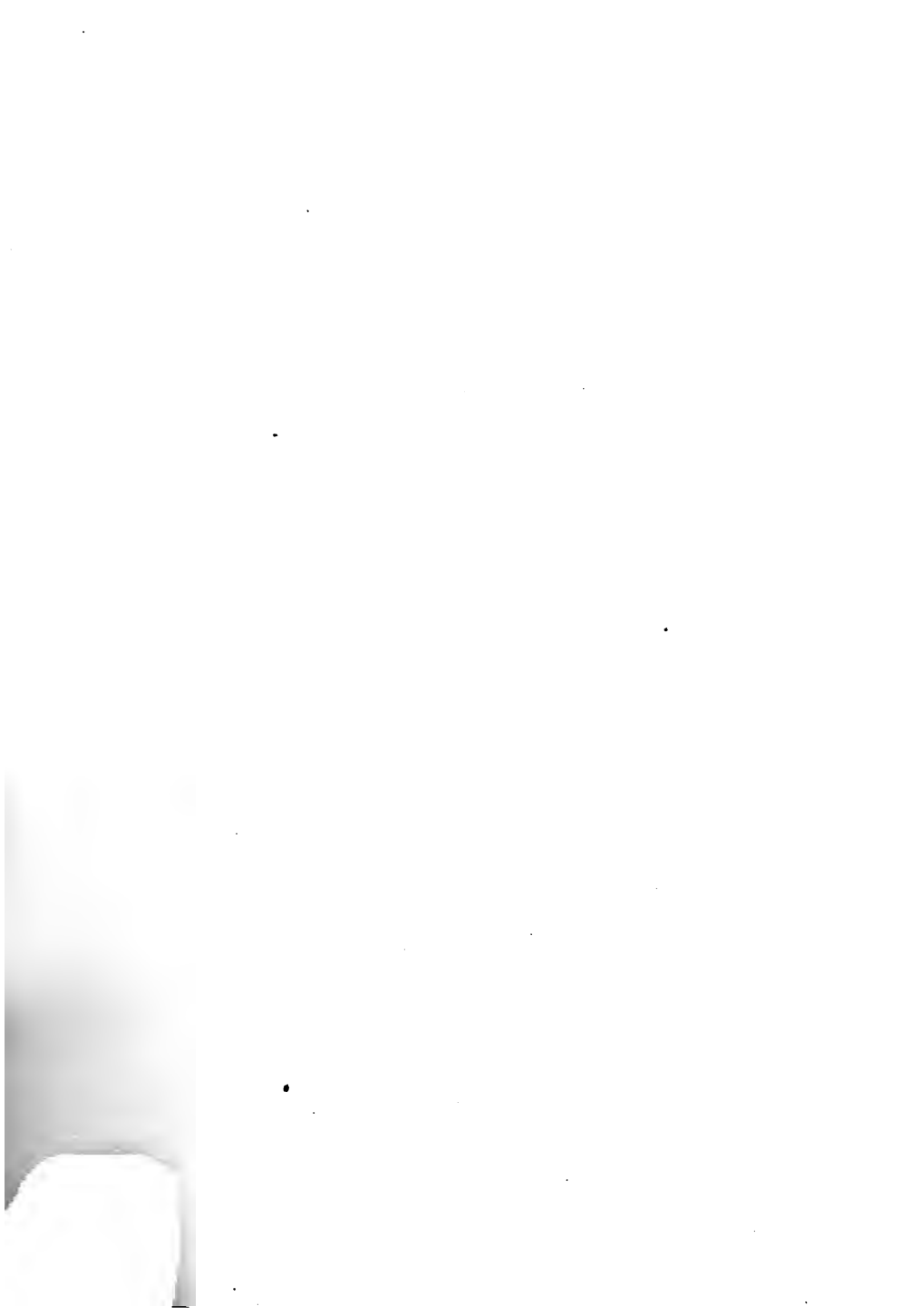
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ROBERTSON SMITH AND SERGEANT MACTAVISH

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# *The Sergeant in the Hielans*



*"In hunc effectum."*—SIR HAIRY

BY

ANDREW LYELL, IN CAWMELTOUN, WHA WROTE  
'OOR NEW CAWNDIDATE'

---

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS

1881





THE  
SERGEANT IN THE HIELANS .

WHAN HE WENT DOUN WT MR LYELL IN  
THE DUNARA CASTLE TO TESTIFY TO THE  
HIELANMEN AGAINST ROBERTSON SMITH

BY  
ANDREW LYELL, LL.D.

SCHOOLMAISTER IN CAWMELTOUN, WHA WROTE  
'OOR NEW CAWNDIDATE'

*"In hunc effectum."*—SIR HAIRY

WT A PORTRAIT OF THE MODERAWTOR

FOURTH EDITION

EDINBURGH  
WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS

1881



270 . 4 . 814

“For my part, I have ever believed and do now know that there are witches. They that doubt of these do not only deny them, but spirits; and are, obliquely and upon consequence, a sort not of infidels but atheists. Those that, to confute their incredulity, desire to see apparitions shall questionless never behold any, nor have the power to be so much as witches. The devil hath them already in a heresy as capital as witchcraft: and to appear to them were but to convert them.”—*Extrackit from a Discoorse by oor Dr Bagg, but said by some to have been first composed by the late Sir Thomas Browne.*

## BLACKIE ON THE BONASSUS!

*(Bein' the Preface to the Fourth Edition o' 'The Sergeant  
in the Hielans'.)*

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"BUT the picter o' the year," said the young Colledge chap, as we gaed alang Princes Street to see the pentins on the Mund, "the picter o' the year is Blackie on the Bonassus!"

"Gude be here," says I; "Blackie on the Bonassus!"

"Plackie on the Ponassus!" says the Sergeant.

"Weel, you see, Mr Lyell," he went on, "it cam aboot in this fashion. It was the evenin' o' the Academy denner. The denner at the Academy is jist famous; as it weel may be; for Sir Daniel an' Sir Noel an' John Hutchison an' Waller Paton an' Robert Herdman an' Gourlay Steell an' George Reid an' William Brodie are the best o' company. But the Professor was not pleased; he had to sit in wan place a' nicht, an' hear ither folk bletherin', wi'oot a chance o' pittin' in a word for himsel', till the verra en'; an' suppressed wind wi' Blackie's waur than suppressed gout wi' you an' me, Mr Lyell. So whan he gat on his legs at last, he jist ran amuck a' roun' the table. He didna come down wi' his speech ready-made in his coat-tails, like the Colledge o' Justice and the Boord o' Lunacy (what ails him at the Boord o' Lunacy?); the preachin' an' prayin' mills o' a' denomi-

nations were clean worn oot; the Penters themselves, wha cud not comprehend his Attick wut, were a pack o' illeerate Tam-noddies; an' he feenished aff by drawin' his skian-dhu (on which the bluidy Cameronian warnin', '*This is to cut the throats o' tyrants,*' cud be plainly read), an' declarin' that he wud change the furm o' government o' the Academy from an Elective Monarchy to a Deemocratic Republic by remuvin' Sir Daniel Macnee! Noo, Blackie is Professor o' Auncient Leeterature to the Academy, and it was impossible for the Cooncil to permit this ootbrak o' profane sweerin' at them and their gues'ts to pass unnoticed. So a meetin' was convened upon the spot, for it was felt that not a mument should be lost in pittin' themselves richt wi' the public, and inflictin' punishment on the creeminal. Some o' the Cooncil were in favour o' corporal punishment; ithers thocht that he micht be left to the cat-o'-nine-tails o' his ain conscience: but it was finally resolved, by a unanimous vote, that he sud munt Bonassus, an' ride the beast from wan en' o' Princes Street to the ither,—an' back.—Bonassus, Mr Lyell, is a Hielan stot that Gourlay Steell keeps in his back-yaird. The savage cratur is said to be the lineal descendant o' the ferocious and untameable brute that belanged to James Hogg the Ettrick Shepherd.—So you see it was a fine chance for Gourlay, who took a hasty sketch before the procession started thro' the crooded streets (whaur the police and the meelitary were drawn up in force, for it was feared by the Lord Provost and Magistrates o' the Ceety, that the Colledge lads micht attempt a rescue), an' which, at subsequent sittins, he has enlarged into a maist pooerfu' an' pathetic pentin'."

A. L.

CAWMELTOUN, 1st March 1881.

## THE SERGEANT IN THE HIELANS.

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DEAR JOHN DRUMLY,—It is our gude freen' Mr Lyell has got me to write you a brief narrateeve of the strange adventures which befel him and the Sergeant—Sergeant MacTavish—when they went down in the Dunara Castle to testify to the Hielanmen for the pure word against Robinson Smuth. He is lying in bed with his wife's mutch tied round his head, and a tumbler o' water-gruel on the table; for the cauld that took him at Loch Boisdale sattled on his stamack, and he is verra bad indeed, and has not drank wan glass of Farintosh neat since Monday week.

Now, you see, we had been at Machrihanish for twa-three roun's o' the links, and gran' links they are,

and the bunkers are jist uncommon. It had been a het afternoon, and the Schoolmaister had been constantly in Hell : so we were takin' a coolin' drink in front of the cozy bit inn at the Pans, kept by that fine woman Mrs Rae, and you know her weel, Mr Drumly. There was an east-country caddy hangin' about the door, Ned by name, who had arrived that mornin' by the boat. He had carried for the Captain in the great St Andrews match, whan the Champion Cross had been won by Fasnacloich against heavy odds,—tho', indeed, there is not wan man on the green can beat Fasnacloich whan he is in trim. But it had been a sair fecht, for Gilbert Innes was the last man in, and a better player than Gilbert Innes never handled a club.

"You'll tak' a dram, Ned," says Mr Lyell, pleasantly ; "it has been het wark to-day."

"I'm beholden to you, Mr Lyell," says Ned ; "but it's only the laste taste in the warld I can be takin' to-night ; for the Minister, you see, has garr'd me jine the Ludge. Stop, sir, stop—a thumlefu' disna coont—but—and here's your gude health," he added, drainin' the glass wi'oot farther ceremony. "It's Mrs Rae that keeps the gude speerits, I reckon."

"That she does, Ned, that she does,—an exem-

plary woman—an exemplary woman. But this single between Fasnacloich and Mr Gilbert—I wish I had seen it, man—the fecht maun hae been truly Humeric. Tell us a' the oots an' ins, Ned; and you may bring ben anither mutchkin, Mrs Rae, whan you are not otherwise occupied."

"Weel, sir, you see they turned a' even—neck an' neck. The first hole hame was halved—the Laird holin' a lang putt. The Captain wan the neist an' the neist—two holes to the gude, and sax to play,—lang odds. But the Laird was cool and keen, and he pit the heather hole in his pooch—the Captain comin' to grief amang the stiff whuns on the brae. At the hole across baith drove weel aff the tee, weel on to Elysium; but the Captain's second shot gaed slap into Hell, an' that sattled *him*. A' even again, and fowr to play—a teuch fecht,—the Laird as white as death, and the Captain verra douce, but no canny to come across. Weel, the fourth hole was halved—never seed it played better; but the neist finished the match—the Laird hookit his ba' into the Preencipal's Nose, and the Captain lay snug on the green at the like. After that, the Laird never lookit up, an' Fasnacloich wan easy at the burn."



It was a bonny evenin' in August—the boom o' the Atlantic in Machrihanish Bay was nae mair than the saftest lullaby—we could hear the bag-pipes across the water in Jura. Weel, Mr Drumly, just as Ned's story cam' to an en', there was a rummle o' wheels on the road ahint the hoose, and presently a pairty o' gentlefolk descended at the front door,—as far as we could judge in the uncertain light, they were three o' them—twa in black coats and white stocks, the third in a kilt.

“Gude be here!” said Mr Lyell, whan he saw the kilt, “it canna be Blackie, surely. Sergeant,” says he in a whisper, turnin' to Mr MacTavish, wha was takin' his drink quietly, like the douce man he is, “it's the Gaelic chair, Sergeant—the Gaelic chair, wi'oot doot. *The appointment is made, and you're the man.* But no—that's the MacGregor tartan; and it's the Royal Stuart (for he is sib, you see, to the auld Kings) that the Professor wears for choice.”<sup>1</sup>

They gaed into the hoose, and after a bit Mrs Rae cam oot to whar we sat. “They're seekin'

<sup>1</sup> The folk here are sayin' that the gran' new skian-dhu the Professor gat whan he jined the Lan' League should be seen to by the Poliss. But, Mr Drumly, that's jist spite. For Blackie's bark is waur than his bite, and he tell't me himsel' that it was made o' wud.—A. L.

you, Mr Lyell, you and the Sergeant, and you're to gang ben directly."

Noo, Mr Drumly, what I am about to relate is strickly private; on *that* Mr Lyell is positive; and you maun gie your word of honour that you will not divulge it—not even to Mrs Drumly—this side the grave. Dr Wull and Sir Hairy are men aboon suspicion; sae are the Sergeant and Mr Lyell: but there are ill tongues waggin' in the warld, and if it was to get into the irreleegious papers, there would be the deevil to pay—and mair.

"We've come to see you, Mr Lyell," said Dr Wull, oot o' the partial darkness, for the can'les had not been lichted, "about that unhappy lad Smuth—Robinson Smuth. We are fairly seek o' him and his warks. It is clean impossible to grup him—wan micht as weel grup the aurora borealis or the ignis fatuus. He has nae respeck for age and infirmity—mental or pheesical. Auld Dr Muddy is fairly worn aff his legs—Shirra Cawmell is in the dead-throws—there are times, indeed, whan Sir Hairy himsel' is not sure if he is standin' on his head or his heels. And what's waur,—they are beginnin' to say that his laa is better than the liars', and that he has mair deevenity than a' the dee-

dees. The pison o' asps is under his tongue, and the elders o' Aberdeen and the deacons o' Dunfermline are infeckit wi' the pison. There is not wan Presbytery this side Strathbogie through which the deadly venom has not spread. The demon o' rationalistic creeticism, Mr Lyell, is stalkin' thro' the lan'; it waukens up MacHowley in the dead o' nicht, sae that his puir wife canna get a wink o' sleep: there is an end o' Presbyterian simpleecity and domestic feleecity if the evil speerit is not laid. Noo, you maun understan' that we had a bit conference last week,—there was me, and Sir Hairy, and Dr Bagg, and MacHowley, and a wheen mair; and we have resolved, Mr Lyell, to bring the business to a feenish. You see, the Commission have appinted a Committee of Inquiry; there are some raw lads upon it—freens o' Smuth—(appinted *per incuriam*,—tho', indeed, we cud not help it); but the majority are discreet and reasonable men, wha ken what belangs to Gospel truth and is becomin' in a meenister o' the Word. The Report is not yet prepared, and it wull not be prented till the Commission meets; for it is onsuitable to expose it to the ignorant creeticism o' the ungodly and malignant. But it wull prove that the articles in the

Cyclopædia are in fack an' laa a pernicious and detestable assault upon the infallibeelity o' the Scripture narrateeve, inasmuch as thay contain divers passages in which the saintly men o' the Auld Testament are treated wi' unbecomin' fameel-iarity, and in which the predictive aspect o' the prophecies (and what is prophecy if it disna predick?) is disowned and discredited. I tell you this in confidence, Mr Lyell, for it is right that *you* should know what the Committee—whan it deeberates—will do. Noo, the Commission *in hunc effectum* (as Sir Hairy says) is convened to meet on the 27th of October, and this is the 20th of August. It is essential, Mr Lyell, for the peace and prosperity of our Zion, that the Report should be adopted by an overpoorin' majority. But, as I have said, there is a speerit of revolt abroad in the Low country; and the fack is, my freens, wi'oot further prologue, that we maun get the Hielanmen to come and help us. From the bleak hills of Judea the chosen people lookt down upon the Pheelistines; and amang your hills and bogs, Sergeant MacTavish, the pure flame o' Gospel truth still burns freely, undimmed by the fogs o' German pheelology and the stour o' Oxford rationalism.

It is not the first time, Sergeant MacTavish, that the Hielanmen have swept the plain; it is not the first time, Mr Lyell, that, wi' their Bibles in their han's and their broadswords on their backs, they have testified for Kirk and King! Listen, Mr Lyell—this is what Dr Bagg said at the Conference—his verra words;—Go to that understanding man Mr Lyell, schoolmaister in Cawmelton. He is weel acquaint wi' the great Gaelic scholar, Sergeant MacTavish, who is a cawndidate for the Gaelic chair. Tell them that they are summoned and commissioned by the Kirk to carry thro' this goodly matter. They maun gird up their loins, and go down in the Dunara Castle to the Outer Hebrides. Amang the misty islands whar Columbus introduced his detestable superstitions, they wull seek oot the deacons and ministers o' the true Kirk. The puir bodies will be swear to come a' the road to Edinbro',—for the haerst is late this year in the Lews; but thay maun leave the pleuch and the harrow and the reapin' heuk, and trust that Providence will keep the winter back a bit. The Sergeant's Gaelic is known to be the best in the Hielans; and if he and Mr Lyell between them canna persuade the Hielanmen to atten', it will be fairly impos-

sible for either you or me, Doctor—I tell you frankly.”

Weel, Mr Drumly, the upshot o’ the matter was, that the Sergeant and Mr Lyell agreed to go. It was a serious responseebeeelity undootedly ; but the gude opeenion o’ the Kirk was verra flatterin’, and the weather was fine for the time o’ year, and the eatin’ and drinkin’ on boord the Dunara Castle is o’ the verra best, and beats the Clydesdale’s fairly.

“And ye’ll be pleased,” says Dr Wull, turning at last to the man in the kilt, wha was sittin’ in an obscure corner wi’ the tail o’ his kilt pued between his legs, “to meet the Laird o’ Fer——”

“Whist, Doctor, whist,” says Sir Hairy, kickin’ his freen’s shins promiscuously under the table.

“The Man in the Mune,” says Dr Wull, pu’in’ himsel’ up, an’ winkin’ pleesantly on the company.

“Is it possible ?” says the Sergeant, gettin’ on his legs, and glowerin’ into the darkness ; “him that was taen up for gatherin’ sticks on the Sabbath——”

“The Chancellor o’ the Exchequer,” the Doctor went on, wi’ a humersome chuckle, disregarding the interruption.

"Ho, ho!" says Mr Lyell, beginnin' to see how the land lay.

"There is a distressin' amount o' destitution in the Hielans an' Eelands o' the Wast Country, Mr Lyell, especially amang the elders and deacons and meenisters o' the Kirk——"

"Exackly," says Mr Lyell, noddin' his head.

The Doctor nodded in seempathy; but Sir Hairy had turned his back, and was attentively regardin' the prent of the Dook aboon the lum.

You have heard of the enchantments of the Arabian Nichts, an' have nae doot wutnessed the wicked devices o' the Wuzard o' the North,—the late Mr Anderson; but it's the truth I'm tellin' you, Mr Drumly, — *three wechty bags o' Bank o' Scotland notes and bullion appeared as if by magic on the table.*

"And the Laird proposes that a decent an' con-seederate man should undertak the deestribution, wi' sic personal remuneration for travellin' expenses an' subsistence-money as may be deemed necessary an' reasonable."

"But the laa again' bribery an' treatin', Doctor?" Mr Lyell inquired dootfully, after a pause.

"Hoots, Mr Lyell!—the State may stick at trifles

of that kind ; but the Kirk, as you know, is not subjec' to Cæsar. Whar wud we have been in the '43 if we had permitted oorsels to be hampered by the freevilous technicalities o' the laa ? The Ceevil Coorts have nae jurisdiction within a releegious society ; for a releegious society is a laa unto itself, and its tittle-deeds are in the Registry above."

"I was hearin' they were seen to by that glib lad Innes,—Tyler Innes (an' indeed he is glib wi' the pen, tho' a yammerin' body on his legs)," says the Schoolmaister, who can never resist his bit joke.

Sir Hairy leuch, but the Doctor was not pleased.

"For every idle word, Mr Lyell——"

"Hoots, hoots, Doctor! it was only a bit joke, and a bit joke hurts neither man nor beast. But it's time we were muvin'," says he. "The Dunara Castle, they were tellin' me, is to stop at Arran this trip for twa muckle stirks the Dook is sendin' to Lochiel ; so we wull take the early boat to Loch Ranza, an' meet the steamer at Brodick in the evenin', after dinin' wi' my gude freen Mr MacDonald at the Douglas Arms."

The verra air was infeckit wi' Smuth. Even on



the packet to Loch Ranza they were fechtin' aboot him in the forecastle.

"Of course, that's what they will be saying, Bailie Stott" (it was the vice o' that body Mac-Howley; but he is not the right sort, Mr Drumly); "but what about the pernicious papers which even the yeditor o' the Cyclopædia wud not prent, but sent them back to the author——"

"But he didn't send them back."

"The pernicious and pisonous papers which the yeditor keepit——"

"But he didn't keep them."

"And wull ye be for tellin' me, Bailie Stott, that the pestilent, pernicious, pisonous, and pestiferous papers which were written by Smuth——?"

"But he didn't write them."

"O man, but ye're easy imposed on——"

"But Professor Baynes says, and Professor Smuth——"

"And wha are Professor Baynes and Professor Smuth, man? Blind human beetles fleein' aboot that stinkin' toom o' misallaneous ineequity—the Cyclopædia Brittawnica. But Dr Dingweel is a match for baith the misbelievers, and he kens fine—kens by the illummination o' the speerit, which

is mair poorfu' than the carnal sense—that the papers were written, and posted, and payd for.”

We took a short cut across Ben Noosh,—sendin' the pockmankey (*which was wechty, as you may believe*) roun' by the Ivanhoe. The mountain o' the Wun, steeped in thun'er and racked wi' storm, stude up black as ink against the sky; yet at pints there were glints o' sunshine that pented the green on the bracken and the purple on the heather; and from the tap o' Tarsuin we saw a streak o' silver in the west—which betokened fine weather at sea.

“It will be a goot day to-morrow whatever,” said the Sergeant on the road down.

“The boat is rather crowded to-night,” says that fine man Mister Donald, as he gaed us oor tickets, after seein' the stirks hoisted in wi' the landing-tackle. “We have the Grand International Social and Scientific Congress (personally conducted) on board, and they occipy every corner o' the cabin. But it's a nice warm evenin' whatever, and you and

the Sergeant, with your rugs, and a taste of Talisker to keep the Clyde fog oot o' the stamack, will do fine on deck, Mr Lyell."

"And this is Mr Lyell," says a tall, handsome, middle-aged young man wha was smokin' a seegarette on the gangway. "What an unlooked-for pleasure! I was afraid I might have to leave Scotland without meeting you and the Sergeant. Sergeant MacTavish, I've written a book on the Gaelic myself, and I'm proud to make your acquaintance."

"I didna jist catch the name," says Mr Lyell, dootfully.

"To be sure—I forgot to introduce myself. I'm Matthew," says he, liftin' his hat, "Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—all the Apostles rolled into one—the subtler spirit and finer aroma of their rather crude thaumaturgy, you understand,—but you may call me Matt if you like—all my friends do—it's handier. Come along—I've got Mr Donald to put some easy-chairs on deck, and the steward is to bring us a venison pasty and the hot water presently, and we'll make ourselves comfortable for the night. What a balmy night, to be sure!—with just a tonic touch of salt from the sea. Your

Scotch stars are highly respectable, Mr Lyell ; but it's a thousand pities they couldn't spare you a moon."

The fascination o' that lazy lang-legged English chiel, Mr Drumly, was perfectly incomprehensible. Andrew Lyell is a man o' the warld, and the Sergeant has seen service in ilka quarter o' the globe ; but they were hand and glove wi' him before the remains of the pasty had been removed. It was no gude trying to be deefident and deeplomatic ;—he had learnt ilka word aboot the Confidential Mission to the Hielanmen before the third jug of punch was brewed.

"I'm a detective, a spiritual detective," says He, lauchin' ; "don't you fancy you can keep anything from *me*. By the way, Mr Lyell, that portmanteau which I lifted up the ladder,—*it's verra wechty*"—says he, lookin' the Schoolmaister stracht in the face, and speakin' suddenly in the purest Scots. "Is it the family plate, Mr Lyell——?"

"O Lord!" said the Schoolmaister, lookin' as white as death.

"Never you mind, Mr Lyell—I'm neither a thief nor a constable—the family silver is safe for me. But this Smith that you speak of—(I've heard the

name before, I think — or was it Brown?) — he's clearly a desperate bad one; and, were I you, Mr Lyell, I would look well to the spoons. — And so you are bound for the Hebrides like myself, — the farthest Hebrides, as Wordsworth says in one of his forgotten poems —

“‘ Breaking the silence of the seas,  
Among the farthest Hebrides.’

I'm not a Wordsworthian myself, mind you — though perhaps the most remarkable and fruitful discovery of my life is connected with the old man of Rydal. You have heard of it, Mr Lyell? No? Most people have; but, to be sure, we are here on the confines of civilisation. A LITTLE OF WORDSWORTH GOES A LONG WAY, — that's the text, Sergeant, which I have elaborated with astonishing success in my recent selection from his poems. *To be recognised far and wide as a great poet, Wordsworth needs to be relieved of the poetical baggage which now encumbers him; and until this is done, he has not had a fair chance before the world.* That's what I said in the Preface; and I flatter myself that I divided the ore from the baser metal, the wheat from the chaff, with true critical

fidelity. But as soon as the book was printed—will you believe it, Mr Lyell?—up jumped Mr Palgrave, to whom I had paid a pretty compliment on his *Golden Treasury*, and declared, in language I will not repeat, that he had made the same selection fifteen years before, and that my original discovery was no discovery whatever, but only an infringement of his copyright, which he would vindicate in a Court of Law.”

“But was it the fact, sir?” Mr Lyell asked in a whisper.

“Well, sir,—and suppose it had been?” says He, wi’ a snap. “But the allegation is contrary to the fact; for tho’, I grant you, the pieces are substantially, or at least mainly identical, yet the fine lines beginning—

“I have a boy of five years old,”—

are entirely omitted from the selection (so-called) of Mr Francis Palgrave. Can it be maintained for one moment, sir, that a collection in which that precious poem is conspicuous by its absence, fairly represents the spiritual simplicity and subtle many-sidedness of the Wordsworthian lyric? Moreover, Mr Lyell, there is not a word in *his* preface about the grand discovery—which is the best proof that

it had not been made. I do not deny, mind you, that in a dim and obscure sort of fashion it may have presented itself to his mind ; but you might as well maintain, on the strength of some ingenious papers in the Spectator, that Addison invented the electric telegraph and the telephone."

They were aff the Mull by this time, and the conversation was temporarily suspended.

"Mr Lyell," says He, whan he had returned from the side o' the ship, "this is my first (and last) experience of a personally-conducted party. The idea was good ; it was intended to bring the leaders of Light and Sweetness together in a friendly way ; but it hasn't worked ; we started from Euston three days ago, and to-night not a soul is on speaking terms with his neighbour. Browning has done nothing but tear his hair over Sordello ; he has clean forgotten what it meant, and as not another soul ever knew, it is now an unfathomable mystery,—like the Darnley murder or the song that Achilles sang ; and Alfred—but hush—here he comes——"

And a verra big man began to pace up and down the deck in front o' us, his lang elf-locks streamin' in the nicht-wind. He was muttering uneasily to himsel'.

"Poor old Alfred,—he is worrying himself about little Ally. He can't at all make out, you see, where the dickens the boy came from? He is at it now, Mr Lyell,—it is really very distressing, and one hasn't a notion what to give him,—we should have brought Dr John,—ay, ay, there he goes again."

And oot o' the darkness o' the star-licht cam these mysterious words,—

"O dear Spirit, half-lost  
In thine own shadow, and this fleshly sign  
That Thou art Thou—who wailest being born  
And banished into mystery, and the pain  
Of this divisible-indivisible world,  
Among the numerable-innumerable  
Sun, sun, and sun, thro' finite-infinite space,  
Infinite-finite Time—our mortal veil  
And shattered phantom of that infinite One,  
Who made thee inconceivably Thyself  
Out of his whole World-self and all in all."

"Alas! alas!" observed a dreich-lookin' man, wi' his hair pued across his nose, who had joined us unnoticed as we were list'nin' to the geeberish. "It is clear that to Tennyson, as to Carlyle and myself, it has become a quite utterly unspeakable business. Life and death, birth and begetting, the unknown eternity of the past, and the unknown eternity of



the future—have they not, one and all, become profoundly incredible? And we are expected to unravel the something amiss in this divinely or diabolically tangled skein by the rule of three and the fardels of political economy! You fancy, my foolish friends (some of you at least), that two and two make four, and that your souls (or what of them is left to you) may be saved from Beelzebub thereby. But it is not so: that two and two make four has been to me for many years a proposition intrinsically preposterous. When you have proved to me that Milton and Shakespeare = Jones and Brown, then I may listen to the shallow sophistries of the Radical and the Iconoclast,—meantime I continue to believe that two and two do not make four, but an infinitely unknown quantity. Far more precious to me than the lifeless formulas of a servile logic and a mercenary arithmetic is the simple *Ailie-dailie* of Scottish childhood,—simple, yet crowded with associations and urgent with memories that are incalculably comforting to me and mine.”

He followed the ither into the darkness like a dream; and then Mr Matthew resumed,—

“Lively company, you will say, very lively company, for a man rather hipped by London dinners

and London fogs. The fact is, Mr Lyell, that we English are all Puritans by nature,—the Hebrew element comes out in us, the Hellenic cheerfulness drops away from us, the moment we are over sixty. Originally, no doubt, a form of dyspepsia, Puritanism has by this time entered deeply into our moral nature, tainting the conscience as well as affecting the stomach. And—but what a shindy these fellows in the steerage are making!—why—God bless my soul!—it's Tom Hughes and Froude trying to pitch Swinburne overboard. Let us trust, Mr Lyell, that the vile conspiracy will be frustrated: but of course," he continued placidly, as he resumed his seegarette, "of course it's no affair of ours; and if the unspeakable Swinburne should follow the unspeakable Turk into the darkness, why, between ourselves, Sergeant, there are one or two choice morsels of rhyme, by a friend of my own, with the Publisher—— Well, Mr Lyell, as I was saying, the gloom that hangs over modern England is due as much to its religion as to its fog. Why, then, should you and I seek to perpetuate the grotesque illusions of its dismal and illiberal life? That they are illusions no one doubts; for, except to some half-dozen old gentlemen in the country, your precious

Westminster Confession has become absolutely antiquated. Indeed, Mr Lyell, the whole of the anthropomorphic and miraculous religion of tradition is ceasing to be credible even to our women. You may make believe for a little longer if you like; but you had much better bury it decently out of sight without more ado. Nor is there anything surprising in this,—you are only reaping what you have sown. The Stream of Tendency by which all things seek to fulfil the law of their being, the Eternal which makes for Righteousness—and what more can we say?—the temple of this August Idea has been materialised into an English middle-class Olympus, from which all the joy and grace of the Hellenic is withdrawn. It is only a superficial antagonism, Mr Lyell, that exists between the man of science and myself—a mere juggle on words. For if the promise and potency of every form of life are to be found in matter, where is the difference between us? Call it matter if you like, Mr Professor; I call it spirit. No, Mr Lyell, the men of science are not the materialists. The ideas which science appropriates are intrinsically *immaterial*—rising above the fogs of sensible phenomena into an ampler ether and a diviner air; and nothing touches the soul to finer

issues than the contemplation of the Sovereign Laws of Universal Life. Whereas those grotesque and fantastic figures which middle-class misery and madness and malice have painted upon the darkness—— Ah, Mr Lyell, on a night like this, when innumerable worlds are wheeling noiselessly through the void, can you not for one brief moment divest yourself of a too obtrusive and clamant personality, can you not lose yourself for one moment in the Mellow Stream of Universal Being, content to have it said for you, as your sole title to immortality— He lived in the Eternal Order, and the Eternal Order never dies?”

There was a curious fire in his eyes—veesible in the darkness—as he uttered the last words, and for some minutes no wan spake. Mr Lyell had a creepin’ feelin’ aboot his back; he looked at the Sergeant, but the Sergeant was fast asleep.

“Weel,” says Mr Lyell, at last, “I’m not illeebral or inqueesitorial; but you wull admit, Mr Matthew, that something maun be done wi’ heretics, Papists, Sabbath-breakers, sheep-stealers, and siclike? What wud you do wi’ a misbeliever, Mr Matthew, if I may tak the leeberty of asking?”

“IT IS MACLEOD’S UNIVERSAL SHEEP-DIP

THAT IS GOOT FOR THEM," said a sepoolcral vice. It was the Sergeant speaking in his sleep; but whether he was meanin' heretics or gimmers or tups, we could not tell.

"Ah, well, Mr Lyell, the Sergeant may not be so far wrong. Nothing like the Highland sheep-dip for removing inconvenient vermin. Your Robertson Smiths will cease from vexing the souls of the fathers in Israel when they have had a touch or two of the tar-brush. But enough of Scotch theology,—a little of it, like Wordsworth, you know, goes a long way. Why, that must be Erin-go-bragh over there? The faint blue line along the horizon, is it indeed the Emerald Isle? She looks peaceful enough from the outside, to be sure; but what a legion of evil spirits have taken up their abode in her, and how they are tearing her to pieces! You are a Liberal, I presume, Mr Lyell; most Scotchmen are, I am told."

"At preesent I'm Leebral. You see I was a Tory durin' the time they were in offisch; but they never did me ony gude: and what gude they did to Scotland, savin' to mak Taper a shirra and Tadpole a lord, I canna tell. So, in the meantime, I'm Leebral."

"Nothing like conscientious convictions, Mr Lyell. For my own part, I am rather inclined to go over to the Barbarians. I love light, and sweetness, and reasonableness, and am as little a lover of superstition as the most advanced Radical in the Cabinet ; but the passion of the mob is not a weapon which I care to handle. What communion has light with darkness? How can the lover of the idea yoke himself with the blind tumultuary forces of ignorance and fanaticism? We were told the other day, to be sure, that a stock of prime political ideas might be laid in for future use, by the young men of Birmingham meeting together at their political clubs, and airing over their beer the sterile and passionate commonplaces of Radicalism. Not in this way, ye gods!—not at such Thyestean banquet of clap-trap—is a wise and understanding people formed.—But against the mighty sweep of the democracy, what avail our faint and feeble protests? We shy and modest scholars, Mr Lyell, are an old-fashioned community, and the new beatitude which Birmingham has invented—Blessed are the cocksure!—is worth any two of the old."

He was interruptit by a terrific snort from the sleepin' Sergeant. The deep guttural soun's fol-

lowed each other wi' melodious precession, shapin' themselves at last into the solemn march and rhythmic cadence of Gaelic pottery. Mr Lyell explained to Him how it was.

"My dear sir," says He, takin' oot o' his coat-pocket a bit slate an' skeelyvine, "this is a psychological and philological experience of the deepest interest. The Sergeant's Gaelic differs in many respects from the Gaelic we speak at Oxford. So please oblige me, as he proceeds, with a free or literal translation, as suits you best."

I am not good at writing the Gaelic; but this is the English o' the Sergeant's monologue, by that fine man and gran' scholar, Mr Skene:—

## 1.

"Tuan, son of Cairill, as we are told,  
Was freed from sin by Jesus;  
One hundred years complete he lived,  
He lived in blooming manhood.

## 2.

Three hundred years in the shape of a wild ox  
He lived on the open extensive plains;  
Two hundred and five years he lived  
In the shape of a wild boar.

3.

Three hundred years he was still in the flesh  
In the shape of an old bird ;  
One hundred delightful years he lived  
In the shape of a salmon in the flood.

4.

A fisherman caught him in his net,  
He brought it to the king's palace ;  
When the bright salmon was there seen,  
The queen immediately longed for it.

5.

It was forthwith dressed for her,  
Which she alone ate entire ;  
The beauteous queen became pregnant,  
The issue of which was Tuam.

The licht by this time was beginnin' to break :  
we had entered the Sound o' Jura. But He was as  
brisk as ever.

"What I miss in your lakes and mountains, Mr  
Lyell—what I particularly miss in them—is Urban-  
ity. Scottish scenery is more or less brutal. Now,  
if that Peak" (he was lookin' at wan o' the Paps)  
"had dipped the other way, or if the crude blue of  
this unusually movable water<sup>1</sup> were softened by a

<sup>1</sup> It was only a bit jabble after all.



wash of cobalt, how far better it would have been! But the Something or Other in the world that looks after the picturesque has very rudimentary notions of form and colour. Do not suppose that I harbour any prejudice against your country;—I am ready to admit (though I was born among them) that even our English lakes are not entirely successful. You will know what I mean, Sergeant MacTavish, when I say that the Note of Provinciality is painfully apparent. The Lancashire lakes are local and shallow, and want the ineffable sentiment of the Middle Age. This, of course, is the reason why Wordsworth, their chief interpreter, is local and shallow, and wants the ineffable sentiment of the Middle Age—which belongs, indeed, to Oxford alone. O Oxford! Oxford!—Hullo! here come the rest of the personally-conducted, looking very gash in the morning air. Poor devils, it must have been stuffy down-stairs.—You see that lad on the taffrail, Mr Lyell?—that's Black or Brown or Green—I forget his name—the fellow who hails from Styornoway, you know. By Jove! what a lot of body colour the beggar must use!—doesn't he lay it on thick?—And now, Sergeant, just one mouthful before we turn in for a tub,—a rizzared

haddie, shall we say, or the ham and eggs of the British Philistine?"

How it cam aboot, Mr Drumly, was never exackly known. It was an instantaneous cat-ass-trophy. The members of the personally-conducted pairty were colleckit roun' the funnel (for the morn-in' air was chilly), and, wi'oot a moment's notice, the biler burst. The hail members o' the pairty, including the conductor, were blawn into the air, while the ship hersel' began to sink, as it appeared to us.

But He was equal to the deefficulties o' the position.

"Let us save ourselves, Sergeant," says He. "Jump into the dingy, Mr Lyell, and we'll be clear of the wreck before they know what we are about. There's just room for three. *Salus reipublicæ suprema lex.*"

And in anither minute we were clear o' the sinkin' ship (if it did sink, which we had nae leisure to ascertain), and floatin' wi' the tide to the nearest lan'.

It's an ill wind that blows naebody gude. Had

it not been for the Sergeant's leg we would never have got to the shore; for there was not wan oar in the boat, and the pockmankey was a dead wecht. However, we managed to get the leg unscrewed; and it answered verra weel as a rudder.

Oh, Mr Drumly, it's a bonny island! The white eider-drakes are jist in thoosan's, and the sealchs are as tame as Robin-redbreasts. And a' nicht lang you hear the pipe o' the plover and the skirl o' the whaup; and you draw the blanket up to your nose, an' dream o' the blessed islands which were veesited by the wise Ulysses. And the grey rock wi' its border o' purple heather (and the heather this year was jist uncommon) rises oot o' the green sod, whar the bog-pimpernel and the loose-strife are bloomin' amang the bracken. And the ferns, Mr Drumly!—there are jist perfect thickets o' the hartstongue, and the hay-scented, and the sea-spleenwort, and the Royal.

"Indeed, Mr Lyell," says He, "we have fallen upon our feet. This is the island valley of Avilion (as you may have heard), to which they brought the wounded Arthur :—

Where falls not hail or rain or any snow,  
Nor ever wind blows loudly ; but it lies  
Deep-meadowed, happy, fair with orchard-lawns  
And bowery hollows crowned with summer sea,  
Where I will heal me of my grievous wound."

And the inhabitants were mair than freenly. Donald the inn-keeper is a man o' judgment and discretion (it is a blen' o' Farintosh and Talisker that he keeps); and wha can describe the Laird, Sir Duncan? You see, the Sergeant had been in his company in the Crimea (whar the Sergeant lost his leg, and Sir Duncan his twa fingers); and the moment Sir Duncan heard it was his auld corporal, he had him up to the Castle, and there were fine times for the Sergeant.

It was only the second morning after we lairdit that Murdoch the keeper (and Murdoch, who is a fine big man, was pentit for the Queen's ain buik, as you know, Mr Drumly) cam down to tell us that there was to be a sealch-hunt that day. They were takin' the big boat, and there wud be room for the three o' us. Sae by the time the Colonel drove doun, we were ready on the pier.

Weel, Mr Drumly, we had a famous day. Mr Matthew was jist the life and sowl o' the party.

At wan moment he wud swear that he didna care a bodle for Sir Walter's bastard epicks (as he ca'ed them); at anither he declared that the Lord o' the Isles was jist as fine and breezy a cruise roun' the wast coast as the heart o' man could desire. He wud settle in Scotland himsel', he said, if it wasna that he micht possibly come across a Scotchman——

"But this is grand!" he went on, whan we had run roun' to the lonely rocks whar the great sea-lions dwall. For you maun understand, Mr Drumly, that there are twa kinds o' sealchs—the Raon and the Tapist. It was the great Tapists we were seekin' that day. They live on the ootside reefs, wi' not a rock (except the Dhu Hertsich) between them and Newfundlan'. It is seldom they see the face of man, except whan a big ship in the wild winter weather, after wan cruel scrape amang the breakers, goes stracht to the bottom wi' every sowl on board. We were lying between Cann-riva an' Ellan-na-rhoan, in a braid open channel which the blind rollers dinna reach. The wan rock was covered wi' sealchs o' the smaller sort—grey shinin' objec's lying aboot in coontless numbers on the wrack. (You can tell a sealch, Mr Drumly, by its

shimmer on the wrack ; for the tangle, you observe, disna refleck the licht). Black bullet-heads were constantly appearin' aboon the water,—rising and sinkin' noiselessly, or lookin' aboot wi' an air o' conseederate enquiry for places to lan' canny. Them on the rock were jist obviously in the enjoyment of perfeck feeleecity,—lollin' lazily on their backs in the heat, or fannin' themsels' wi' their flappers as a leddy wi' her fan. Only the great Tapists—the sea-lions on Cann-riva—were snappin' and snarlin' and fechtin'.

“Hand me the glass,” says Mr Matthew to the under-keeper, whan we had landit Sir Duncan and Murdoch. “I must have a near look at a Tavish. What a row they are making, to be sure! That toothless old villain is an ugly customer when roused, I'll be bound. Look at his back teeth,—or rather at the stumps! I tell you what it is, Mr Lyell—they are holding an *in hunc effectum* meeting of Commission, and the Moderator (that's what you call him?) is in the chair! Now, I wonder what the subject under discussion may be? One would like to know what they think about predestination, and free-will, and effectual calling, and the origin of species, and the punishment of the wicked?

Have they any Darwins or Huxleys among them? Anyway, its theological—for they are beginnin' to show their teeth. I have it now, sure enough: keep the boat steady for one moment, will you? 'Tis a trial for heresy, I declare; the queer, inquisitive, hungry-looking little chap in the centre is the cul-



prit, and the grandfather of all seals,—the owner of the tusks,—has been laying down the law and practice of the Kirk. The young one wishes to put in a word, but they won't listen—not they. See how their flappers are going, and their tails! Hear to

the worrying and growling! And now there is a general scrimmage; old Methuselah has got the heretic by the tail—he holds on like grim death—they'll be off the rock presently if they don't look sharp—ay, ay—down they go into the deep water, and the whole Commission after them."

It was Sir Duncan's bullet that, in pint o' fack, had dispersed the Assembly; and whan we rowed up to the place, we found that wan of them had been badly shot. The beast, however, had slipt down the side of the rock: and tho' the hail sea was red wi' his blude, it was lang or ever we could manage to heuk him up. Whan he cam to the surface, Mr Drumly, it was jist fearsome to look at him,—a' the warst passions o' his last mument o' controversy were stamped upon his face. For it was the Moderawtor himsel'. He weighed exackly 44 stun.

We ran back in the best o' speerits. There was a spankin' breeze, and the air was jist intoxicatin'. (If it cud only be bottled and exported like the meen-eral water, there wud be sma' necessity for pheesic.) And the Colonel and oor Oxfurd freen' gaed aff a' the road hame like Roman can'les or Manby's rockets—the best o' fireworks. Mr Matthew sang



wan o' Mendelshun's melodies (improved by Sir Herbert Yokeley); he danced a reel wi' the Sergeant; and whan he was fairly oot o' breath, he got Murdoch to recite an Eerish psalm that was brought to the island by Saint Columba. [It is in Mr Skene's new book, and the translation is fine and leeteral]:—

## 1.

“Should any one inquire of me about Eire,  
I can tell most accurately  
Respecting every invasion which took place  
From the beginning of all-pleasing life.

## 2.

Ceasair set out from the east,  
The woman who was daughter of Beatha,  
Accompanied by fifty daughters,  
As also by three men.

## 3.

The deluge came on.  
Bith resided at his mountain without secrecy,  
Ladra at Ard Ladran,  
And Ceasair at her corner.

## 4.

As to me, I remained a year under the flood  
At Tul Tuinde of strength.  
There had not been slept, nor will there be slept,  
A sleep better than that which I had——”

"That'll do, Murdoch, that'll do; he must have been an uncommon long time under water;—unless he was one of your own seals, I don't very well see how he got it out of him. But I suppose we were all seals about that time; and, to be sure, I would rather any day be a seal than a chimpansee. I'm told they have a fine ear for music. *Gaudebant carmine phocæ*. But they'll prefer the Gaelic tunes, I daresay, in these parts—Ossian, Fingal, Blackie, and that sort of thing?"

"Well, sir," says Murdoch, "you will know that aal our shepherds they have two dogs—the one he speaks the English, the other he will speak the Gaelic. But I do not know myself what the sealchs will be saying,—tho' the old people in the Island——"

"Exactly. They have heard the sea-maids sing many a time: and by the way, Colonel, the Colon-say mermaid who lost her heart to the Laird must have been a sweet slip of a lass. How does the old ballad run?—

"On Jura's heath how sweetly swell  
The murmurs of the mountain bee!  
How softly mourns the writhed shell  
Of Jura's shore, its parent sea!

And softly floating o'er the deep,  
The Mermaid's sweet sea-soothing lay,  
That charmed the dancing waves to sleep,  
Before the bark of Colonsay.'

But—seals or mermaids, Murdoch—there's something very human indeed about a phoca, and when one of them sails up to take a look at my Tweed wideawake — with that wistful appeal for sympathy in her brown eyes—hang me if I wouldn't miss her on purpose!"

The neist day was the Sabbath.

It was wan o' the disadvantages of our position that there was nae Free Kirk in the Island. But the Rev. Peter MacCraw,<sup>1</sup> wha ludged at the Inn, spoke on the hillside on Sabbaths during the summer months. He was gey an' auld, and he cam here for change o' air,—leaving the parish o' Drambogie to the services o' the assistant an' successor that the Presbytery had provided. "What's the gude o' keepin' a dowg," says he, "if you have to bark yoursel'?" He was weel acquaint wi' his co-

<sup>1</sup> Peter is wan o' the Parliament Hoose MacCraws,—ye'll mind Angus o' the First Deeveesion?

presbyter, Dr Dingweel o' Drumnadrourthy, and he brocht a sermon by the Doctor in his pocket, which he undertook to read us that day. It was a verra fine discoorse, and was reported in the 'Scotsman' paper at the time (wi' nae gude objec', you may be sure), and if I can get a copy o' the paper I wull pit it in a note. It was upon Robinson Smuth, as you may easily understan',—Dr Dingweel is faithfu' aboon the lave, and disna spare himsel' or his freens. Wha was Robinson Smuth? What call had he to trouble the Kirk? What call had he to hamper them wi' the furms o' process? A martyr? How cud he be a martyr whan he had keepit every penny o' his steepen'? The Hielanmen kent weel hoo to answer his rationaleestic deeficulties: yet it was said that the Hielanmen were behind the age! It micht be that they had sma' respec' for the un-sanctified cleverness o' the creetic an' the pheelologer; it micht be that they had sma' respec' for ony eminence o' learnin' which cud be reached by scholarship and not by grace; but they were steadfast an' immuvable as their ain immuvable mountains, and it was jist as possible to tie their han's wi' reed tape and the furms o' process as the wind which swept the corries o' Cruachan.

"I like that kind of man," said Mr Matthew, as we tramped hame thro' the heather in the gloamin' — "I like him and his picturesque irrationality. Yes, Mr Lyell, these old boys retain what the young ones want ;—they have *character*,—they are idiomatic as their native proverbs; and while the insipid, emasculate, cosmopolitan puppy will be forgotten to-morrow, the mother wit and the homely saws of these Patriarchal Sages will be kept in lively remembrance through many a mountain glen,—for one generation, if not for two. And then they are part and parcel of a great corporation, and corporations are cohesive and permanent. The man who cuts himself loose from the organised prejudices of his contemporaries is a fool for his pains. For after all, my friends, what and how much do the wisest of us know? I stand by the immeasurable sea, and stretch out my hands into the unfathomable darkness; — *Tendentemque manus ripæ ulterioris amore.*"

It still wanted a day till the steamer was due. We were sittin' on the shore near the Red Rocks.

"  
The sea at oor feet was like a sheet o' glass; phantom islands rose oot o' the purple mist: on the ither han', the sunset was clear over Newfundlan'. As we sat there we saw a boat comin' stracht from Jura. We were rather drowsy at the time. There had been strange soun's heard in the Inn durin' the nicht, which had broken oor sleep. It seemed as if a' the deevils that passed into the swine were fechtin' in Gaelic ootside the front door. "Wan of oor shepherds and wan of the principallest men in the island had a little misunderstanding," Donald remarked, whan we saw him in the mornin'. Then there was an auld bantam-cock an' a young Cheena fule wha began crawin' hours before it was daylight. Mr Matthew had flung his brushes, and his big boots, and his best breeks, and every article o' furniture in the bedroom, at them oot o' the window; but they crawled as crusely as ever;—it was a competitive competition, and the little wan wud not be beat. Weel, Mr Drumly, the boat cam nearer an' nearer, but the tide was contrar. It got dark an' rayther chilly; so the Sergeant an' Mr Lyell gaed into the hoose. They were jist tellin' the lass to bring the het water ben, whan—

"Mr Robinson Smuth!!!" says Donald, openin' the parlour-door.

"Angels and Ministers o' Grace!!!!" says Mr Lyell.

"The Devil!!!!!" says the Sergeant.

It *was* Himself, Mr Drumly, and he began the conversation wi' perfec' affabeelity in the native tongue. "Αλδ οβορ οντο φοσκο φορν ιο ριγ δυμ φυν ιδος ηστον κρο τον θολιγ ος. But, gentlemen, shall I address you in Gaelic or English?" he added, seein' that Mr Lyell did not exackly follow him.

The Sergeant's eyes watered. "It is the goot Gaelic he has. But you will speak the English, sir, if you please—this shentleman has not much of the Gaelic now."

"More's the pity," says he, "for it is the language of skeelful poets and brave men. Gentlemen, I heard you were in the island, and it occurred to me that a few minutes' conversation in private might tend to remove certain misconceptions which——"

"I'm agreeable, Mr Smuth," says the Sergeant, wi' ready politeness. "But you will be takin' your doch-an-dorris before startin'?"

"Not a drop, Sergeant. Wi' sic a keen and wechty controversialist as Mr Lyell——"

The Schoolmaister booed.

Weel, Mr Drumly, they were at it a' nicht. The young lad was maist respectfu', as was only proper and becomin', seein' that the Sergeant and Mr Lyell are men o' age, and wecht in the community. But, Mr Drumly, facts are facts. If Jeeremiah had mair birr than the minor prophets, what's the gude of sayin' that he had not? If every word o' the Pentateuch was not written by Moses, whar's the sense of sayin' that it was? Facts are facts, Mr Drumly.

The sun was risin' over Jura whan they shook han's. The Sergeant and Mr Lyell walked down wi' him to the pier, whar the men were lying asleep in their boat. The sail was hoisted; the oars run oot; and by the time they gat back to the Inn, only a dim speck was veeisible on the water—weel across to Ardlussa.

They stude at the Inn door for a bit—the mornin' air was sweet and balmy.

"What do you think, Sergeant?" says Mr Lyell.

"What do you think, Mr Lyell?" says the Sergeant.



"I think we are twa auld fules," says Mr Lyell.

"You will speak for yourself, Andrew Lyell," says the Sergeant, liftin' his leg to munt the stair. "But he is a clever lad whatever, and it is the goot Gaelic he has."

*(For Mr Lyell.)*

ANGUS GRIERSON,

*Probationer in Cawmelton.*

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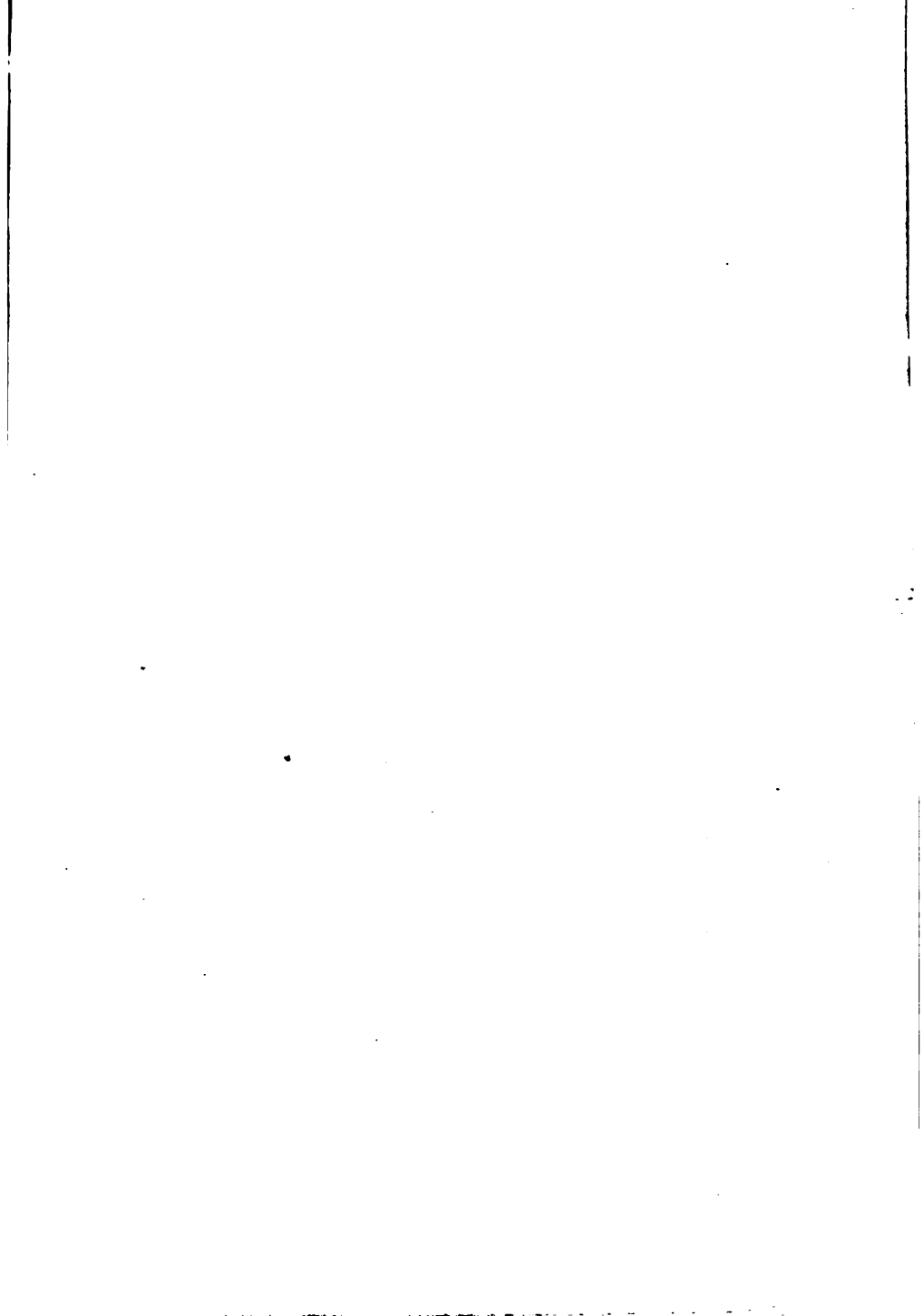
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